



Economically Distressed Subgroup – Vision Strategies

Vision: To put Virginia back on the road to recovery, we must pay attention to the areas that have been the hardest hit. No recovery will be complete until jobs and economic opportunity are available in all parts of Virginia. The McDonnell Administration has already placed a great emphasis on urban and rural communities with the 2010 Legislative Agenda and the appointment of a Deputy Secretary for Rural Economic Development. This subgroup will develop the next steps to provide new jobs and economic opportunity in distressed areas.

Approach:

- I. This subgroup will examine existing programs/initiatives (both within the Commonwealth and in other states) and look at ways to improve economic development in both our rural and urban localities and recommend innovative ideas to get people in our hardest hit communities back to work.

Strategies:

- I. Develop strategies to expand deployment of high-speed broadband and other infrastructure improvements in economically distressed areas. – **Harold Pyon**
- II. Assess state incentive programs can be designed to locate, retain and expand businesses in economically distressed areas. – **Del. Marshall and Steve Smith**
- III. Encourage distressed areas to identify, embrace and promote asset-based economic development opportunities. – **Del. Kilgore and Steve Smith**
- IV. Increase regional collaboration and regional marketing in economically distressed areas. – **Del. Kilgore and Donna Morea**
- V. Promote the revitalization of vacant or underutilized commercial and industrial buildings. – **Del. James**
- VI. Determine how development of both traditional and renewable energy resources can be maximized in rural and urban areas. – **Del. Kilgore**
- VII. Consider recommendations on how to expand agri-business opportunities and market Virginia agricultural products across the nation and around the world. – **Donna Johnson**
- VIII. Increase access to capital for businesses in economically distressed areas. – **Harold Pyon and Donna Johnson**
- IX. Consider expanding programs like “Return to Roots” to recruit the skilled workforce to support target industries like advanced manufacturing and information technology. – **Del. James**

- X. Expand ability of communities to develop and implement strategic economic development projects and initiatives, including strategies to assist and streamline permitting and zoning processes for smaller localities and municipalities. – **Del. Marshall**